

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 CIAE-00 INR-11 L-03 ACDA-19

NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00

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R 221750Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4757

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

CNO WASHDC

CINCLANT

COMICEDEFOR

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 1157

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MARR IC

SUBJECT: MARINE CORPS BILLET REDUCTION IN IDF

REF: STATE 179522

1. I BELIEVE WE CAN EVENTUALLY BRING ABOUT THE REDUCTION OF 16 MARINE CORPS BILLETS AT IDF BUT I AGREE WITH COMICEDEFOR THAT NOW IS NOT (RPT NOT) THE TIME. WE SHOULD WAIT UNTIL THE NEW ICELANDIC GOVT IS FORMED AND WE RESUME IDF RETENTION NEGOTIATIONS. WE CAN APPROACH THIS SUBJECT LOCALLY AFTER (RPT AFTER) WE TALK ABOUT OVERALL MILITARY REDUCTION NUMBERS. DEPT SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THE DIFFICULTIES WE WENT THROUGH ON HOW TO COMPOSE THE SO-CALLED "TABLE III," THAT IS, WHETHER TO PITCH IT TOWARD "DEFENSE OF ICELAND" OR THE "SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITY." THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY AND GEIR HALLGRIMSSON IN PARTICULAR (WHO MAY BE THE NEW FONMIN) MADE IT UNMISTAKINGLY CLEAR TO ME SEVERAL TIMES THAT HE WILL NOT "TOLERATE" A REDUCTION OF THOSE IDF ELEMENTS WHICH PROVIDE "ACTUAL DEFENSE OF ICELAND." HE PUTS THE
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F-4 AIRCRAFT AND THE MARINES IN THIS CATEGORY.

2. ALMOST ALL ICELANDIC POLITICAL LEADERS CAN RECITE BY MEMORY THE NUMBER OF MARINES WE SUPPOSEDLY HAVE "GUARDING" ICELAND. IF WE REDUCED THIS NUMBER AT THIS TIME THE COMMUNIST PRESS WILL HAVE A FIELD DAY CHIDING THE NEW GOVT FOR THE CAVALIER DISREGARD BY USG OF THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY'S DEFENSE STATEMENTS MADE DURING THE LAST ELECTION, ETC. IT WILL ALSO UPSET OUR PRO-IDF SUPPORTERS IF DONE NOW.

3. MY CONSULTATION MEETINGS WITH AMBASSADOR ANDERSEN WERE SUSPENDED IN JUNE WHEN HE LEFT FOR LOS CONFERENCE IN CARACAS. HE IS STILL THERE. BETTER FORUM WOULD BE PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH NEW FONMIN AT APPROPRIATE TIME.

4. I HAVE NO DOUBTS WE CAN ACCOMPLISH THE REDUCTION BEFORE END OF CALENDAR YEAR BUT LET US NOT UPSET MATTERS AT THIS PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANT MOMENT.
IRVING

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